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cont

a support structure defining an at least substantially enclosed periphery of a support member, the support structure defining first and second inwardly directed opposing support surfaces facing one another; and

actuator means located within the at least substantially enclosed periphery of the support member and operably positionable between the first and second inwardly directed opposing support surfaces for moving the support structure between a rest position and an actuated position in response to an excitation of the actuator means.

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Please cancel claims 8 and 9 without prejudice.

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11. (Amended) In an apparatus for use in an application including at least one of clamping and valving having a support structure and piezoelectric actuator, the improvement comprising:

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the support structure being a single piece of material having shape memory with a high modulus of elasticity and high strength, the support structure defining first and second opposing actuator-support surfaces facing one another and spaced apart from one another, the piezoelectric actuator operably positionable with opposite longitudinal ends engageable with the first and second opposing actuator-support surfaces for driving the support structure between a rest position and an actuated position in response to excitation of the piezoelectric actuator.

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Please cancel claims 16 and 17 without prejudice.

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Please add the following new claims:

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19. (New) An apparatus for use in an application including at least one of clamping and valving, the apparatus comprising:

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a generally I-shaped support structure including at least one web defining at least one flex axis with respect to the remaining support structure, the support structure defining first and second opposing support surfaces facing one

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another on one side of the at least one web and defining at least one rigid arm moveable about the flex axis on an opposite side of the at least one web; and

actuator means operably positionable between the first and second opposing support surfaces for moving the at least one rigid arm of the support structure between a rest position and an actuated position in response to excitation of the actuator means.

20. (New) The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

the at least one web of the support structure including first and second webs connected in one integral piece to at least one arm moveable relative to the remaining support structure about a flex axis when the actuator means is driven, wherein one of the webs includes a portion extending with an angled non-perpendicular component to the at least one arm; and

the actuator means positionable between the first and second webs for driving the at least one arm relative to the remaining support structure when the actuator means is driven.

21. (New) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the support structure is a generally I-shaped member.

22. (New) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

the support structure including first and second webs connected in one integral piece to at least one arm moveable relative to the remaining support structure about a flex axis when the actuator means is driven, wherein one of the webs includes a portion extending with an angled non-perpendicular component to the at least one arm; and

the actuator means positionable between the first and second webs for driving the at least one arm relative to the remaining support structure when the actuator means is driven.

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23. (New) The improvement of claim 11 wherein the support structure is a generally I-shaped member.

24. (New) The improvement of claim 11 further comprising:

the support structure including first and second webs connected in one integral piece to at least one arm moveable relative to the remaining support structure about a flex axis when the piezoelectric actuator is driven, wherein one of the webs includes a portion extending with an angled non-perpendicular component to the at least one arm; and

the piezoelectric actuator positionable between the first and second webs for driving the at least one arm relative to the remaining support structure when the piezoelectric actuator is driven.

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